

Table 2: Information Resources Policies and Practices

Category	Brief Summary/Overview
IR Priorities	<p>IR projects originate with the customer program area. The project is further defined, a system model is developed and evaluated, and the IR staff estimates costs. When this process is completed, executive management (associate or deputy commissioner for the area) establishes IR project priority. Priorities are set through a combination of cost-benefit analysis, legal requirements, and hard deadlines set by external entities.</p> <p>The Information Resource Steering Committee (IRSC) (See IR Planning and Methodology for more information on the IRSC.) determines department priorities for major projects and those spanning multiple organizational areas.</p>
IR Planning Methodology	<p>The TDH Information Resource Steering Committee (IRSC) meets monthly. The Chairman is the IRM, the Associate Commissioner for Information Systems, with an associate commissioner representing each deputy commissioner and representatives for the Office of Policy and Planning and Public Health Regions as members. The committee defines policies and does strategic planning for all IR services. In addition, they review and approve proposed standards, and determine department priorities. Additionally, the Data Management Workgroup participates in identifying major data issues such as data systems integration, data sharing, data inventory, and quality control standards. Long range planning also brings input from the decentralized data management teams from around TDH.</p>
Operating System	<p>TDH continues to use Novell Netware heavily for its many file servers. Netware versions 3.12 and later are in use. Microsoft Windows NT is endorsed and increasingly used for database, mail and web servers. Unix platforms are standard for certain internet and database servers. PC workstations may use Windows for Workgroups 3.12, Windows 95/98, or Windows NT workstation and future releases in the Microsoft Windows family.</p>
Development Methodology	<p>TDH utilizes STRADIS as the primary software development methodology for internally developed projects. TDH also allows the use of other methodologies by partnering agencies, contractors or consultants.</p> <p>TDH will reevaluate its choice of development methodology in the coming biennium. TDH will adopt the methodology that is most suitable for current and future technology and the public/private partnership development environment at TDH.</p>

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Software Audit and Management	<p>TDH will develop an agency-wide software audit plan that meets the requirements of HB 1895 and enables better management of resources. The IRSC will appoint a workgroup to identify and evaluate methodologies in use by other agencies and the private sector. TDH will implement the tools and methodology that provides the best cost-benefit for the state and adequate management information for the agency.</p>
Quality-Assurance Practices	<p>TDH is aware of the Internal Quality Assurance Guidelines recently released by the Department of Information resources. The IRSC will appoint a cross agency team to review the guidelines and tailor them for use at TDH. A core Quality Assurance team will be created, under the Associate Commissioner of Information Systems, to implement the Guidelines by providing training, consulting and oversight to development and contract monitoring staff across TDH.</p> <p>The timeline for implementation is:</p> <p>07/28/2000 – Appoint a cross agency review team.</p> <p>11/24/2000 – Complete implementation recommendations and submit to the IRSC for approval.</p> <p>01/26/2001 – Have a core Quality Assurance team in place.</p> <p>04/27/2001 – Have QA Guidelines and implemented and begin training agency staff.</p> <p>All seven areas included in the Information Resources Management Act, from Planning Project Development through Evaluating and Reporting on the project after Implementation, will be covered in the QA Guidelines adopted by TDH.</p>
E-Government	<p>The Texas Department of Health currently has plans to implement eleven initiatives enabling us to transact business using the Internet. These initiatives fall into three broad categories:</p> <p>Use of the Internet to Gain Access to Agency Publications and Information</p> <p>Use of the Internet to Receive Payments</p> <p>Electronic Benefits Transfers</p> <p>Transaction risk analyses will be performed for each of the initiatives listed above. Encryption will be in accordance with the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Data Encryption Standard. TDH will adopt specifications for NIST's Advanced Encryption Standard as these are developed. Transaction sessions will be secured using the Secured Sockets Layer protocol. Authentication mechanisms for electronic transactions will be in accordance with standards published by DIR.</p> <p>The Associateship of Information Systems will collect the information necessary for the IRSC to prioritize the projects necessary to make TDH a full e-government participant by 2003.</p>

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Change Control	<p>Changes resulting from new business requirements must be requested in writing and signed by an authoritative customer representative and should contain a statement regarding applicable deadlines.</p> <p>TDH uses version control software from PVCS and Microsoft.</p> <p>Changes to larger and/or contracted systems go through a more formal review process. For example, change requests for Texas Medicaid Administrative System (TMAS) applications are submitted to Health Care Financing (HCF) in writing. Decisions to implement the changes are determined jointly by HCF and the TMAS contractor. Outcomes of change requests are documented in the Joint Interface Plan (JIP). Change requests for Compass 21 are submitted to the Change Control Board (CCB). The CCB, which includes representatives of HCF and the contractor, National Heritage Insurance Company (NHIC), approves the changes that are to be implemented.</p> <p>The TDH Change Control policy will be reviewed as a part of the process to implement the Quality Assurance Guidelines. As a result the policy may be enhanced at that time.</p>
Security	<p>TDH is cognizant of published information resource standards and is in general compliance. Physical, electronic, and access security has been reviewed for networks, hosts and data for application systems at TDH. Security risk analyses have been done for critical systems and networks at TDH. Documentation of these processes is in progress for many of them. Under the pressure of electronic network host probes and attacks, the detailed network/host/workstation security standards are constantly changing. Recognizing the increased network risks, TDH is currently reviewing its own network security processes. TDH is also monitoring the changing TAC 201.13b process revisions.</p> <p>The newly created position of Director of Planning and Quality Assurance, in the Associateship of Information Systems, will be responsible for promulgating information systems security policy and monitoring compliance with those policies. She will also complete an <u>Information Security Risk Analysis by the end of fiscal year 2001.</u></p>
Geographic Information Systems	<p>TDH actively participates in the Texas Geographic Information Council (TGIC). TDH is currently a limited user of geographic information, primarily using it to perform geo mapping.</p> <p>Examples of TDH uses of geo mapping (Geo Access) are for strategic analysis, to establish trends for program evaluation and to provide sensitivity analysis to changes in diagnostics for service delivery. Geo mapping is also used to determine provider profiles and specialties in geographic locations. This information assists in verifying that providers and services are available to the Texas health care population.</p>

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Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Planning	<p>All mission critical initiatives are required to have disaster recovery plans with a business continuity plan component. The Texas Department of Health Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Plan includes prioritization of application systems and network infrastructure issues into critical and non-critical components. This prioritization is based on time sensitive business flow requirements and on critical public health functions, which are information system based.</p> <p>During the Y2K readiness and business continuity planning process, the information systems were reviewed for critical and time sensitive functions. Business continuity plans were revised for those systems deemed as critical functions. Data and software recovery procedures are documented and stored offsite. Disaster and facility site reviews are conducted and documentation is evaluated for completeness. TDH partners (contractors, service providers, and other agencies) providing critical services are required to provide a copy of their business contingency and continuity plans, which are reviewed by TDH staff.</p> <p>TDH will review plans for use of the Austin Disaster Recovery Operation Center and/or the West Texas Disaster Recover Center, and other resources to enhance the critical application systems recovery process.</p>
Resource Use	<p>TDH is in the process of updating the resource use policy. The new policy limits employee use of computer and internet resources to official State business and incidental, toll free personal use. Each employee will be provided a handbook containing the clear explanations and examples of acceptable and unacceptable use. The policy makes it clear that computer usage (including e-mail) may be monitored and employees have no expectation of privacy regarding use of TDH computer systems. Each employee must review and acknowledge agreement with the policy and guidelines annually.</p> <p>TDH policy also limits use of long distance service to TDH business. TDH operational practice provides reports that allow management to monitor telephone use by employees.</p> <p>TDH policy requires use of teleconferencing over travel whenever the option is the more economical alternative.</p>

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Contract/Consultant	<p>TDH has procedures in place to comply with contract workforce requirements in Article IX of the General Appropriations Act. This includes performing a cost benefit analysis of all workforce contracts and tracking expenditures related to such contracts.</p> <p>TDH utilizes the competitive procurement process to obtain consultant and contracted IR services. Contract specification documents are developed and distributed to qualified vendors who submit their bids for services. TDH develops vendor evaluation and selection criteria to ensure that the selected bid represents best value for the state. TDH has developed various tools to monitor larger contracts throughout the contract term. These include the TMAS issues log, the HCF Bureau of Information Resources (BIR) Automated Issues Log (BAIL) and the <u>Managed Care Deliverables Tracking System</u>.</p>
Information Sharing	<p>TDH follows the practice of using electronic data communication for data interchange with its partners and other agencies whenever possible. TDH will collaborate with the Health and Human Services Commission and other agencies to comply with Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA).</p> <p>TDH follows the Open Records Act for all data requests and ensures <u>compliance with state and federal privacy acts</u>.</p>
Training and Continuing Education	<p>TDH is actively engaged in improving technical training for IR staff as a means of enhancing staff retention and maintaining a high level of technical competencies. Because of the high cost of classroom training for technical areas, we plan to utilize more internet and computer based training opportunities.</p> <p>Individual training needs are determined annually as part of the employee evaluation process. Criteria for course selection include knowledge of the tools used to perform job functions and organizational and personal skills needed perform well within TDH and with TDH customers.</p> <p>TDH operates an automated system, Registrar, which tracks training provided, including organizational training, such as that provided by <u>Human Resources</u>.</p>
Data Center Operations	<p>Most data center operations serving TDH are operated through contractual agreements with other agencies or private contractors. TDH has not assessed the impact to its partners in migrating its data center operations to the West Texas Disaster Recovery and Operations Center (WTDROC). Requirements for use of WTDROC will be considered whenever there are major systems modifications and new systems are designed or purchased.</p>